

Experience

MICHAEL WATKINS ARCHITECT, LLC
Urban Design & Architecture

Designer, May 2016 - Present

Ford's Colony, Williamsburg, Va. 2020 – present.

Located about 4 miles from historic Williamsburg is the existing community of Ford's Colony. MWA was asked to prepare a master plan for a 180-acre site in that community. Unlike the development patterns of the surrounding neighborhoods, MWA was charged with creating a compact, walkable neighborhood, incorporating a mix of building types, civic spaces, as well as a senior living community.

Beach Club, Northwest Oh. 2019 – present

Located on 4.2 acres on the shore of a lake in Northwest Ohio and 1.3 miles from a local downtown, the site is well-located for lake vacationers and seeing this opportunity, RCS Construction hired MWA to prepare a Master Plan for the site. The plan consists of cottages around a central green which is directly on the lakefront, optimizing residents' access to the lake and providing lake views to a high percentage of the units.

Boardwalk, Northwest Oh. 2019 – present

This 4.9-acre site located on the west shore of a lake in Northwest Ohio is less than a half-mile from a local downtown and includes an existing restaurant directly across the street from the lake and a pier. RCS construction hired MWA to prepare a short-term plan for one area of the site considering the renovation of the existing restaurant and the addition of food trucks, seating, and pop-up retail, as well as a long-term plan for the entire site to include housing. Because the site sits atop the dam that hold the lake, the topography was a challenge, but an opportunity which enabled all off-street parking to be away from the lakefront. The plan includes a mix of cottages and townhouses oriented around 4 pedestrian neighborhood greens and paths giving optimum views and recreation opportunities to all.

Blueberry Farm, Central Fla. 2019 – 2020

The Blueberry Farm is a successful pick-your-own blueberry business located in central Florida. The owner and operator of the farm hired MWA to consider phased plan for the farm which saves the pick-your-own portion of the fields (the most profitable portion) as the final phase of the project and incrementally takes over the existing irrigation system to allow for optimal use of the fields through development, keeping the farm as an amenity for the residents. The plan includes a variety of housing types, streets, and civic spaces and incorporates the large area of storm water management required within the civic spaces.

Provenance, Shreveport, La. 2019 – present.

MWA was hired to participate in a design charrette to update the master plan for Provenance, a new town designed by Steve Oubre and Architects Southwest in the early 2000s. The charrette team developed a master plan for all currently undeveloped phases of the project, including a plan for a new mixed-use town center that will become the focal point of community life in Provenance. Schematic architectural designs were prepared for the buildings in the town center. In addition, the team addressed the landscape design and made recommendations for existing civic spaces in Provenance.

Drake Farms, Fayetteville, Ark. 2019 – present.

Drake Farms is a 170-acre mixed-use pedestrian-friendly neighborhood 3-1/2 miles north of downtown Fayetteville. The founders hired Michael Watkins Architect, LLC to assemble a team for two charrettes that took place in early 2019, during which the master plan was prepared as well as a detailed

plan for Phase I and all of the Phase I buildings. The Master Plan incorporates an existing Walnut Grove and connections to the adjacent Razorback Greenway. The neighborhood will be a health-focused employment center with a mix of housing types, uses, a network of streets and civic spaces, and a health district, which will be home to one or more local health institutions. Plans for Phase I are well underway as is the consideration for rezoning of the rest of the property.

Ft. Monroe, Hampton, Va. 2018 – present.

The Ft. Monroe site sits on Old Point Comfort peninsula in the Chesapeake Bay at the mouth of the James River. Ft. Monroe guarded the entrance to the waters that serve the Hampton Roads area. Today, it is decommissioned but it an historic destination. The area adjacent to the fort consists of housing and businesses and the site itself contains a few contributing buildings, existing street grid and a power substation. The proposed plan provides an increased variety of housing types for the area by the addition of new single-family lots as well as renovations to a few existing buildings. The plan addresses its surroundings by facing homes to Mill Creek to the north, the fort to the south and the neighborhood to the west, all while screening the substation from street view. The land directly east of the site is proposed as a park.

Midlothian Special Area Plan, Midlothian, Va. 2018 – present.

Midlothian, a suburb of Richmond, is a hub of commercial activity and a good number of residents but is bisected by Midlothian Turnpike and lacks a clear center. Chesterfield County hired Michael Watkins Architect to prepare an illustrative plan for a specific area. The study area was a 400-acre “Special Area Plan,” an area for which the county is in the midst of preparing an overall plan. Watkins’ team utilized the quarter-mile, 5-minute walk circle to inform the location of multiple neighborhood centers with commercial and civic uses and located as infill residential in between.

Heritage Cottage Court, Ft. Smith, Ark. 2018 – present.

Upon the beginning of construction of the ACHE Property, the town built around the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education, builder Rick Mooney hired MWA to refine the phase 1 plan, which will be called Heritage Village, and to choose houses for specific lots. MWA proposed a cottage court with houses oriented toward the center and mid-block paths with small cottages facing them. Since the program here was primarily student housing, the client wanted a strong common space for students to be able to spend their free time, while being within walking distance of classes.

Car-Free Community, Location Withheld by Request. 2023 – present.

Near a suburb of a major city, MWA was asked to design a town that is not only pedestrian-friendly but completely car-free. The plan follows the site topography and wetlands and hinges on a double armature, one civic and one commercial. Within the armature and fabric of the community, multiple mixed-use neighborhood centers and a variety of housing types, a farm, community gardens and elementary school were proposed. Scott has been involved in designing the Master Plan.

East Rockville Design Guidelines, Rockville, Md. 2018 – present

East Rockville is a neighborhood in Rockville, Md., about 14 miles from Washington, DC. The neighborhood is in somewhat of an adolescent stage, as historically it was mostly 1 or 2 story houses, but as the property values in the neighborhood have gone up, developers and property owners have begun to enlarge existing houses and, in some cases, tear down and start over. The city of Rockville hired MWA, LSG Landscape Architecture and Green Space Alliance to write Design Guidelines to help control the development in the neighborhood and encourage cohesive and unified design. The team collaborated with the city to host community workshops which allowed neighbors to voice their

concerns about what issues might be addressed in the design guidelines. The guidelines address issues such as building mass and height, building orientation, building articulation and parking.

Blythe Oldfield Neighborhood Enhancement Plan, Cleveland, Tenn. 2018 – present.

Blythe Oldfield is an historically industrial neighborhood in the city of Cleveland, Tenn., near Chattanooga. Non-profit organization City Fields hired Michael Watkins Architect, LLC to lead a public charrette in January of 2018 to propose a master plan for the neighborhood. As the neighborhood has been historically disconnected from adjacent Downtown Cleveland, Layton was part of a team that proposed before-and-after proposals of thoroughfares, public spaces and a trail network throughout the neighborhood and a regional park in the abandoned factory site which currently separates the neighborhood from downtown.

East Beach, Norfolk, Va. 2016 – present.

The neighborhood is nearly complete; however, the developers have asked Michael Watkins Architect to create a number of schematic designs for adjacent surrounding parcels. Layton has been involved in these designs as well as the documentation of the existing neighborhood.

Whitehall, Middletown, Del. 2016 – present.

Michael Watkins Architect's primary role has been reviewing architecture for conformance with the Whitehall Pattern Book. In a few instances the firm has been asked to do schematic design for a few buildings on the main square. Layton was involved in the schematic design of the first mixed-use building on the square. He also has been involved in the design review of the elementary school in the neighborhood.

Town Architect and Urban Designer for Union Village, Lebanon, Ohio 2016 – present.

Otterbein Properties owns and operates a 800-unit retirement and nursing home community on about 135 acres in the center of their 1400-acre property. Having come to the conclusion that folks grow older better when they do so in communities of people of all ages, they decided to develop the surrounding property as mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods and hamlets. Layton has been involved in the efforts to take the project from a charrette drawing, through entitlements and finally into the construction of phase 1.

Airmont, Round Hill, Va. 2016 – present.

In 2016, Michael Watkins Architect designed a 20-acre rural hamlet in Round Hill. The site is heavily wooded and is situated on a hilltop overlooking the town. While the site may be small, it involves a range of residential types and civic spaces. Layton has been involved in the design since the project's inception and has worked with architects to help select the schematic architecture for the neighborhood.

Tuckahoe Neighborhood Center Master Plan, Henrico County, Va. 2016 – present.

In December of 2016, Michael Watkins Architect was charged with creating a master plan for a neighborhood center in Henrico organized by a local church. They are looking to expand their campus and are first considering their role in the neighborhood. Following a week-long charrette, Watkins and Layton refined the master plan and civic space designs.

Seaside Code, Seaside, Fla. 2016 – present.

When the time came to update The Seaside Code, Robert Davis and Andres Duany tapped Watkins to collaborate with Seaside's Town Architect, Ty Nunn, Davis' attorney, Doris Goldstein, and DPZ to

undertake the effort. Watkins' familiarity with DPZ, Seaside and his long history as Town Architect in other communities, led to his inclusion in the effort. Layton has assisted with this work.

Mansfield Village, Storrs, Conn. 2016 – present.

The University of Connecticut recently crafted a vision for the future of its campus, a significant goal of which is to increase student housing supply. A local real estate developer saw an opportunity to meet this goal by transforming an older dormitory complex. MWA redesigned the site to maintain nearly all existing buildings while, most importantly, greatly increasing the sense of community.

Twin Lakes, Cary, N.C. 2016 – present.

A roughly 20-acre site along two lakes has been zoned mixed-use with an anchor tenant already selected for the site. The firm has designed a walkable corridor that creates a strong sense of place along the lakes.

ACHE Property Master Plan and Code, Fort Smith, Ark. 2016 – present.

Northwest Arkansas is disproportionately lacking in healthcare professionals per capita. Kyle Parker has responded to this need by building a medical school, the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE), in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. MWA was hired to design a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood that will surround the school. It will provide a community in which residents, employees, students, and visitors can participate in an active and engaged civic life. This new neighborhood will include housing of various types (both market-rate and student housing), offices, shops, restaurants, and civic buildings. The first phases of construction are underway, and MWA recently completed follow-up charrette to refine the master plan and look closely at the next phase.

Leander SmartCode Update, Leander, Tex. 2016 – present.

In 2005 when the town of Leander, Texas wanted to change their development pattern from sprawl to that of traditional, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods, they adopted a SmartCode. In part due to the recession but also due to the details and regulating plan of this new zoning ordinance, developers were passing over the parts of Leander to which the SmartCode was applied. Recognizing that the issue was not the principles behind the code, but how they were manifested in this 2005 zoning ordinance, Leander hired Michael Watkins Architect and Sandy Sorlien to work with residents, developers and their planning staff to rewrite this ordinance to encourage and incentivize development. Layton has been working both with the city and various land owners to provide schematic designs.

Internships	Anguleris Technologies, Carpentersville, Illinois; 2014-2016
Education	Bachelor of Arts in Architecture. Judson University, Elgin, Illinois, 2016
Accreditation	Congress for the New Urbanism-Accredited, 2017
Certifications	Certificate in Classical Architecture, New York, New York, 2016
Affiliations	Congress of the New Urbanism National Town Builder's Association Institute for Classical Architecture and Art Strong Towns
Service	Job Coach, Beaver County Rehabilitation Center, May 2014-January 2016